/316 cont./

212 794 that scripture is, the more or less occult utilization of the Arabic formularies, finally a separate mode of life, in which the hands are devoid of calluses, the face pale, the arms without muscles, the body slender, the health precarious, all these traits make up for the t't'aleb a physiognomy singularly ambiguous and powerful. Let us not speak of his habits, which have nothing to do with the subject, except they sometimes constitute an additional element of segregation.

212 794 789 [688] In fact, very few of these scholars resist the temptation to utilize their power. Sale of exorcisms or making up charms, that is only the lesser evil, and this society, perhaps because it has no clergy, sees no simony in this. But there are white magic and black magic; there are especially demonology and necromancy. In common belief, the t't'aleb, after some success which he uses for the realization of his appetites, is himself victim of the forces that he has released. Like the sorcerer's apprentice, he is henceforth dominated by these forces: demons command him, and finally make him decline, leading him to a bad death or precipitating him into error. It is thus all over for those who frequent him or have had trust in him. The past, even recent, of the Sous and of the Atlas would provide many examples of these deviations. In general, they have taken the form of manifestations of fanaticism or indeed of messianism. To go back only to the last independent amghar of the Haut /Upper/ Seksawa, it was the t't'aleb-s of the Mentaga who, making demoniacal alliances glitter before him and promising him "mastery of the hour," launched him on a hopeless adventure. Many anecdotes of similar type could be reported. And certain ones even more recent.

127 Here is a document emanating from a fqîh, not from the Seksawa at all, but from a closely neighboring montagnard tribe, the Ergita, document acquired on the occasion of a judicial action, autographic, and offering, from an ethnological point of view, so much interest that we shall give it here in extenso. It is a confession.